

REMARKS

In view of the foregoing amendments and following remarks responsive to the Office Action of November 22, 2002, Applicant respectfully requests favorable reconsideration of this Application.

In Section 1 of the Office Action, the Office objected to Claim 21 because step (3) in line 11 should be renumbered to step (4). Applicant agrees and has amended Claim 21 accordingly.

In Sections 2-5 of the Office Action, the Office rejected Claims 1-8 and 10-25 under 35 USC §102(b) as being anticipated by Mishra and Claim 9 under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over Mishra in view of Rosen.

Applicant respectfully traverses the prior art rejections.

The present invention is a method and apparatus for automatically opening files of particular types on a computer using certain attributes, such as window size and window position, as dictated by how the user previously positioned and sized windows when viewing files of the same type. It further includes the concept of, when a user opens a certain file of a first type (the first file), automatically opening a second file that has some file name attribute relative to the file name of the first file. For instance, whenever a file having a particular given name with a first file type extension, e.g.,

johnsmith.doc, is opened, the computer will automatically open a second file having the same file name but a file name extension of a second type, e.g., johnsmith.pdf. The invention is particularly useful for users who repeatedly open one or more files of certain types that they would like to be sized and positioned in the same place every time and/or repeatedly need to open two related files and view them simultaneously, such as might be necessary for repetitive data entry tasks.

In its broadest aspect as recited in independent Claims 1 and 21, the software of the present invention remembers at least one display attribute of a file being used by a user. The attribute, for instance, may be the position and size of the window in which the file is displayed. Then, when the user opens up another file of the same file type, it will open in a window in the same position and of the same size as a previous file of the same type. The invention can be applied to several different file types so that a user can open multiple files that he/she may need to view simultaneously and they will always open up in the position and size windows that the user desires.

While the Office has provided a detailed description of the rejections for each individual claim, it is only necessary herein to discuss the rejection of Claims 1 and 21 since they are the only independent claims and they distinguish over the prior art of record. All other claims depend from either claim 1 or claim 21 and, therefore, benefit from the same distinctions over the prior art.

Thus, turning to the rejection of Claim 1, the Office asserted that Mishra teaches a method of providing an interface with displayable computer files comprising the steps of displaying a first file in a manner customized by an operator, storing data indicating a value of at least one attribute of the manner in which said first file was displayed associated with the data indicating a type of said first file, and, when the next file of the first file type is opened, displaying that file with the same value of that attribute as the first file.

Applicant respectfully traverses. Mishra discloses a method for displaying and managing a set of related images (an image set) on a computer screen. More specifically, the user can tailor the display protocol to each type of work station he/she frequents. This yields a descriptive triple viewing: session type/for user/on work station type. There does not appear to be any discussion in Mishra of file types or of remembering the size, position or any other attribute of a window associated with a particular file type.

While Mishra appears to disclose the concept of making the individual windows in a work place user adjustable it accomplishes this in an entirely different way than the present invention and does not involve any dependence on file type determination, let alone storing the user settings when a last file of a particular file type was closed and using those settings for all subsequent files of the same file type.

Applicant does not dispute that Mishra discloses a user configurable work space comprising multiple windows of size and position selected by the user. However, this is a far cry from what is claimed in claim 1. Claim 1 does not just claim that the screen layout is user configurable, but claims a way of doing it that is essentially transparent to the user and requires nothing of the user other than to open a file in a window and position and size the window the way he/she wants it. The software automatically will open up subsequent files of the same type (e.g. same file name extension) with the same configuration.

Mishra discloses nothing of the sort. Mishra discloses a system in which a user may generate and store custom session configurations. While Mishra's session configurations do, in fact, comprise a work space layout comprising particular window positions and sizes, they also include the particular images that go in those windows. Applicant finds no discussion whatsoever in Mishra of taking the display parameters of a given session configuration and applying them to anything other than the particular images specified in that session configuration, let alone applying it to other images based on their file type. Mishra merely discloses a system in which the user can configure how a particular, defined set of images are displayed. There is no disclosure whatsoever of displaying other files based on the way previous files were displayed, and certainly no disclosure of doing so based on file types. This is the core aspect of the present invention, i.e., displaying subsequent files based on the way previous files

of the same file type were displayed. Mishra simply does not disclose anything relevant to such a function.

The portions of Mishra that the Office refers to as teaching steps (2) and (3) of Claim 1 are essentially irrelevant and simply do not disclose such features.

For instance, the Office asserts that step (2) of Claim 1 (“(2) storing data indicating a value of at least one attribute of the manner in which said first file was displayed associated with data indicating a type of said first file”) is taught in column 13, lines 1-11 of Mishra. However, these sections of Mishra do not support the Office’s contentions. Column 13, lines 1-11 merely disclose that DImage record structure holds all the information relevant to the presentation of the image such as size, etc. It does not disclose that the information is stored in association with a file type. As discussed above, in Mishra, the information is stored in association with a single specific file. Essentially, it merely discloses that there is some work space format for an image set.

The Office further asserted that step (3) of Claim 1 (“(3) when a next file of the type of said first file is opened by an operator for display, displaying said next file having the same value of said attribute as said first file”) is taught in column 24, lines 41-59 of Mishra. However, Column 24, lines 41-46 of Mishra do not disclose this feature.

Particularly, that portion of Mishra states:

The Display Generation Algorithm ensures the display of particular image sets according to the general rules as established by the user via a Display Protocol Specification session (or by a default). It does so by interacting with run-time algorithms previously described such as the initialized routine.

This merely states, as noted above, that the image sets comprise actual particular images associated with specified window sizes and positions. It says nothing about applying the parameters used in connection with one image to another image, let alone doing so based on file type.

Accordingly, claim 1 clearly distinguishes over Mishra.

Independent Claim 21 contains similar limitation and, this, distinguishes over the prior art for the same reasons.

All other claims depend from one of Claims 1 and 29 and, therefore, also distinguish over the prior art for the reasons discussed above in connection with Claim 1.

Even further, the dependent claims recite even further distinguishing features. For instance, with respect to claim 2, the Office asserted that Mishra teaches storing the aforementioned value when the first file is closed by an operator. The Office specifically referred to column 4, lines 28-32 of Mishra. However, that portion of Mishra merely discloses that the user may want the screen arranged in a particular way, e.g., with three work spaces in which to review the table of contents, the index, and the chapters of the book, respectively. Subsequent text within Mishra discloses that the user may develop a work space set up to allow such viewing. However, this needs to be done manually and consciously by the user. It is not performed automatically by the software upon closing of a file of a particular type.

With respect to Claim 3, the Office asserted that Mishra teaches that the stored value is an attribute value of the first file when it is closed. The Office specifically referred to column 13, lines 9-11 and 33-40 in this regard. However, those portions of Mishra merely state that the user may create particular image arrays, called "Review Sets", comprised of particular groups of images. This has absolutely nothing to do with the present invention.

With respect to Claim 12, it adds steps (4), (5) and (6), in which, whenever a user opens a first file of a first type, a related second file of a second type is automatically opened by the software. Merely as a specific example, the relationship

between the files may be that they have the same name, but different file name extensions as described in detail in the specification.

The Office asserted that Mishra inherently teaches a second displayable file and also teaches that the whole set of images, files or all other last stated configurations will be saved for any review and performs the steps recited in Claim 12. However, this cannot possibly be true. Mishra's image sets are predefined with specific images. In the present invention as claimed in Claim 12, when one file is opened, the software automatically figures out a second file to open based on some attribute of the file name. In Mishra, no such process is performed. The image set is simply defined as comprising particular images. When the user opens an image set, the computer opens all of the images in the image set. This is completely different from what is described in Claim 12. In Mishra, there is no dependence on file types or any algorithm for determining a second file to open. All of the image files are simply found in a list of the images that comprise that image set.

Mishra is no different than a typical digital photo processing package in which photograph albums can be created by the user so that, when the user opens an album, all of the photos belonging to that album are opened. This has nothing to do with what is claimed in Claim 12.

Claim 25 is a dependent apparatus claim that depends from Claim 21 and is similar to Claim 12 in relevant respects. Accordingly, dependent claim 25 further distinguishes over the prior art of record for all of the reasons discussed above in connection with claim 12.

Applicant has further added new dependent claims 26, 27 which depend from claim 12 and new dependent claims 28 and 29, which depend from claim 25. They recite specific examples of the feature described in Claims 12 and 25 pertaining to automatically opening a second file when a first file is opened. Particularly, Claims 26 and 28 define that the "relationship" between the first and second files is that they have file names with identical portions. Claims 27 and 29 depend from Claims 26 and 28, respectively, and further add that the identical portions are the file names (minus the file name extensions).

For the reasons discussed above in connection with the Claims 1 and 12, Mishra obviously does not teach anything like this. Particularly, Mishra does not teach anything relating to using file names and file name extensions to determine how and when to open a file.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, this application is now in condition for allowance. Applicant respectfully requests the Examiner to issue a Notice of Allowance at the earliest possible date. The Examiner is invited to contact

Application No. 09/614,852

March 20, 2003

Applicant's undersigned counsel by telephone call in order to further the prosecution of this case in any way.

Respectfully submitted,

Dated: 3.20.03



Theodore Naccarella
Registration No. 33,023
Synnestvedt & Lechner LLP
2600 Aramark Tower
1101 Market Street
Philadelphia, PA 19107
Telephone: 215-923-4466
Facsimile: 215-923-2189

Attorney for Applicants
International Business
Machines Corporation

MARKED UP VERISON OF AMENDED CLAIM

21. (Amended) A computer program for providing an interface with displayable computer files on a computer display, said program comprising:

(1) means for determining a value of at least one display attribute of a first displayable file on a computer;

(2) means for determining a type of said first file;

(3) means for automatically storing said value associated with data indicating said type of said first file when said first file is closed; and

([3] 4) means for displaying a next file of the same type as said first file using the same value of said attribute as said first file when a next file of the type of said first file is opened.